

Response to Advisory Action of May 29, 2008
09/839,697

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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) An analytical system for facilitating decision making ~~given a situation~~ by generating and accessing arguments, wherein each argument of the arguments supports an associated conclusion as to whether ~~[[the]]~~ a given situation will likely have a negative or positive result, the analytical system comprising:

a database for storing a plurality of templates, ~~each of the plurality of templates including that each include~~ a plurality of questions queries which when answered ~~responded to~~ generate a particular argument supporting an associated conclusion regarding a particular situation, ~~that is the associated conclusion~~ based on ~~answers~~ responses to its associated template questions queries; and

an argument server comprising:

means for a user to select one of the plurality of templates which is most relevant to the given situation;

means for receiving ~~answers~~ responses to one or more ~~of the selected template's questions~~ queries of the one of the plurality of templates from said user;

means for receiving supporting evidence from said user in response to said one or more ~~of the selected template's questions~~ queries of the one of the plurality of templates, the supporting evidence being relied on by the user to form at least one of the ~~answers~~ responses;

means for associating said supporting evidence received from said user with said ~~answers~~ responses to said ~~template questions~~ one or more queries;

means for ~~determining a conclusion supported by said answers, said conclusion indicating~~ evaluating said responses to determine whether the given situation will likely have a positive or negative result;

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means for generating a new argument supporting ~~[[the]]~~ a conclusion of the evaluating, the new argument comprising the ~~selected template~~ one of the plurality of templates, the ~~associated answers~~ responses, the supporting evidence, and the conclusion; and

means for publishing said new argument, including said one of the plurality of templates, said answers responses, said supporting evidence, and said associated conclusion, for review.

2. (Cancelled)
3. (Currently Amended) An analytical system as recited in claim 1, wherein ~~each template's questions are~~ the one or more queries are formed in a hierarchical structure, wherein a parent question query that has a plurality of children ~~questions~~ queries is automatically ~~answered~~ responded to by ~~answering~~ responding to the parent's children ~~questions~~ queries of the parent query.
4. (Currently Amended) An analytical system as recited in claim 1, wherein the argument server is further configured to associate a rationale with each ~~answer to each template question~~ of the responses.
5. (Currently Amended) An analytical system as recited in claim 1, wherein input to one or more of the ~~selected template's questions~~ one or more queries is received from a plurality of users over a computer network.
6. (Previously Presented) An analytical system as recited in claim 5, wherein the argument server is further configured to allow one or more of the plurality of users to generate and associate comments to at least a portion of the new argument.
7. (Original) An analytical system as recited in claim 6, wherein the comments are only accessible by one or more specified users.

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8. (Currently Amended) An analytical system as recited in claim 1, wherein each ~~template question of the one or more queries~~ is a multiple choice question.
9. (Currently Amended) An analytical system as recited in claim 8, wherein each multiple choice question asks to what degree of likelihood will a particular factor related to the particular given situation have a positive or negative result.
10. (Currently Amended) An analytical system as recited in claim 9, wherein each multiple choice question has a categorical scale of likelihood represented by a set of answers responses that partition the ~~likelihood~~ categorical scale of likelihood.
11. (Currently Amended) An analytical system as recited in claim 9, wherein the plurality of queries associated with each template's questions of the plurality templates are formed in a first hierarchical structure, wherein the argument server is further configured to automatically answer a parent ~~question~~ query having a plurality of children ~~questions~~ queries based on answers responses to ~~the parent's children questions~~ queries of the parent query.
12. (Currently Amended) An analytical system as recited in claim 11, wherein the argument server is further configured to allow more than one ~~answer~~ response for each ~~question of the plurality of queries~~.
13. (Currently Amended) An analytical system as recited in claim 11, wherein the parent ~~question~~ query is automatically answered using a ~~answering~~ response technique selected by a user.
14. (Currently Amended) An analytical system as recited in claim 13, wherein the ~~answering~~ response technique is selected from a group consisting of: a maximization technique, an averaging technique, and a minimization technique.

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15. (Currently Amended) An analytical system as recited in claim 11, wherein each ~~answer~~ response within the first hierarchical structure has a color selected from a subset of colors, each color of the subset of colors representing a different ~~answer~~ response so that ~~the hierarchical structure's~~ colors of the first hierarchical structure convey a line of reasoning.
16. (Currently Amended) An analytical system as recited in claim 11, wherein one or more ~~template questions~~ of the plurality of queries is associated with a second hierarchical structure of ~~questions~~ queries and the first hierarchical structure and ~~the~~ second hierarchical ~~structures~~ structure together form a set of cascaded arguments.
17. (Currently Amended) An analytical system as recited in claim 1, wherein one or more ~~template questions have~~ of the one or more queries has an associated discovery tool that facilitates ~~answering of such associated template questions~~ responding to the one or more of the one or more queries.
18. (Currently Amended) An analytical system as recited in claim 1, wherein each ~~template~~ of the plurality of templates is associated with a situation ~~descriptors~~ descriptor and the argument server selects one of the plurality of templates which is most relevant to a ~~particular~~ the given situation by comparing a ~~current~~ the given situation to ~~[[the]]~~ situation descriptors associated with the plurality of templates to thereby find ~~[[the]]~~ a most relevant one of the plurality of templates having ~~[[the]]~~ a most closely matching situation descriptors descriptor that most closely matches the given situation.
19. (Original) An analytical system as recited in claim 1, wherein the argument server is further configured to allow creation of a new template, wherein the new template is created by an expert.
20. (Currently Amended) A method for facilitating decision making ~~given a situation~~

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by accessing or generating an argument supporting a conclusion for ~~[[the]]~~ a given situation, the method comprising:

presenting to a user a plurality of searchable templates, wherein each template ~~of the plurality of searchable templates~~ includes a plurality of ~~questions~~ queries;

receiving from said user a selection of one of said plurality of searchable templates, said one of said plurality of searchable templates being a relevant template most related to the given situation;

receiving from said user one or more ~~answers~~ responses to one or more ~~questions~~ queries of the relevant template;

receiving from said user supporting evidence in response to said one or more ~~questions~~ queries, the supporting evidence being relied on by the user to form at least one of the ~~answers~~ one or more responses;

associating said supporting evidence received from said user with at least one ~~answered template question of said one or more queries for which a response has been~~ received;

~~determining a conclusion supported by said answers, said conclusion indicating~~ evaluating said one or more responses to determine whether the given situation will likely have a positive or negative result;

forming a new argument supporting ~~[[the]]~~ a conclusion of the evaluating, the new argument comprising the ~~selected one of said templates~~ relevant template, the one or more ~~answers~~ responses, the supporting evidence, and the conclusion; and

publishing said new argument, including said ~~at least one answered~~ relevant template ~~question~~, said one or more responses, said supporting evidence, and said conclusion, for review.

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 20, further comprising associating a rationale provided by said user to each ~~answered template question of~~ said one or more queries for which a response has been received.

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23. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 20, wherein ~~each template's questions are~~ the plurality of queries associated with each of the plurality of searchable templates is are formed in a hierarchical structure, wherein a parent ~~question~~ query that has a plurality of children ~~questions~~ queries is automatically ~~answered~~ responded to by ~~answering~~ responded to the parent's children ~~questions~~ queries of the parent query.
24. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 20, wherein input to one or more ~~of the selected template's questions~~ of the one or more queries is received from a plurality of users over a computer network.
25. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 24, the method further comprising allowing one or more of the plurality of users to generate and associate comments to at least a portion of the new argument.
26. (Original) A method as recited in claim 25, wherein the comments are only accessible by one or more specified users.
27. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 20, wherein each of the one or more queries ~~template question~~ is a multiple choice question.
28. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 27, wherein each multiple choice question asks to what degree of likelihood will a particular factor related to the ~~particular~~ given situation have a positive or negative result.
29. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 28, wherein each multiple choice question has a categorical scale of likelihood represented by a set of ~~answers~~ responses that partition the categorical scale of likelihood ~~scale~~.
30. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 28, wherein each ~~template's~~

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~~questions are of the plurality of queries associated with each of the plurality of~~
~~searchable templates is formed in a first hierarchical structure, the method further~~
~~comprising automatically answering a parent question query having a plurality of~~
~~children questions queries based on answers responses to the parent's children~~
~~questions queries of the parent.~~

31. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 30, the method further comprising receiving more than one ~~answer~~ response for at least one ~~question of the~~
plurality of queries.

32. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 30, wherein the parent ~~question query~~ is automatically ~~answered~~ responded to using a ~~answering a response~~
technique selected by a user.

33. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 32, wherein the ~~answering~~
response technique is selected from a group consisting of: a maximization technique, an averaging technique, and a minimization technique.

34. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 30, wherein each ~~answer~~
response within the first hierarchical structure has a color selected from a subset of colors, each ~~color of the plurality of colors~~ representing a different ~~answer response~~ so that ~~the hierarchical structure's colors of the first hierarchical structure~~ convey a line of reasoning.

35. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 30, wherein one or more ~~template questions of the plurality of queries~~ is associated with a second hierarchical structure of ~~questions queries~~ and the first hierarchical structure and the second hierarchical structures structure together form a set of cascaded arguments.

36. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 20, wherein one or more

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~~template questions have~~ of the one or more queries has an associated discovery tool that facilitates ~~answering of such associated template question~~ responding to the one or more of the one or more queries.

37. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 20, wherein each template of the plurality of searchable templates is associated with a situation ~~descriptors~~ descriptor, the method further comprising selecting one of the plurality of searchable templates which is most relevant to ~~a particular~~ the given situation by comparing a ~~current~~ the given situation to ~~[[the]]~~ situation descriptors associated with the plurality of searchable templates to thereby find ~~[[the]]~~ most relevant ones of the plurality of searchable templates having the ~~most closely matching~~ situation descriptors that most closely match the given situation.

38. (Original) A method as recited in claim 20, the method further comprising creating a new template, wherein the new template is created by an expert.

39. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium containing program instructions for facilitating decision making ~~given a situation~~ by accessing or generating an argument supporting a conclusion for ~~[[the]]~~ a given situation, the computer readable medium comprising:

computer code for presenting to a user a plurality of searchable templates, wherein each ~~template~~ of the plurality of searchable templates includes a plurality of ~~questions~~ queries;

computer code for receiving from said user a selection of one of said plurality of searchable templates, said one of said plurality of searchable templates being a relevant template most related to the given situation;

computer code for receiving from said user one or more ~~answers~~ responses to one or more ~~questions~~ queries of the relevant template;

computer code for receiving from said user supporting evidence in response to said one or more ~~questions~~ queries, the supporting evidence being relied on by the user

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to form at least one of the ~~answers~~ one or more responses;

computer code for associating said supporting evidence received from said user with at least one ~~answered template question~~ of the one or more queries for which a response has been received;

computer code for ~~determining a conclusion supported by said answers, said conclusion indicating~~ evaluating said one or more responses to determine whether the given situation will likely have a positive or negative result;

computer code for forming a new argument supporting ~~[[the]] a conclusion of the evaluating, the new argument comprising the selected one of said templates relevant template,~~ the one or more ~~answers~~ responses, the supporting evidence, and the conclusion;

computer code for publishing said new argument, including said relevant template, ~~said answers~~ one or more responses, said supporting evidence, and said conclusion, for review; and

a computer readable medium that stores the computer codes.

40. (Currently Amended) A computer system operable facilitate decision making ~~given a situation~~ by accessing or generating an argument supporting a conclusion for ~~[[the]] a~~ given situation, the computer system comprising:

one or more processors;

one or more memory, wherein at least one of the processors and memory are adapted to:

present to a user a plurality of searchable templates, wherein each ~~template~~ of the plurality of searchable templates includes a plurality of ~~questions~~ queries;

receive from said user a selection of one of said plurality of searchable templates, said one of said plurality of searchable templates being a relevant template most related to the given situation;

receive from the user one or more ~~answers~~ responses to one or more ~~questions~~ queries of the relevant template;

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receive from the user supporting evidence in response to the one or more ~~questions queries~~, the supporting evidence being relied on by the user to form at least one of the ~~answers~~ one or more responses;

associate the supporting evidence received from said user with at least one of the one or more ~~answers~~ responses;

~~determine a conclusion supported by said answers, said conclusion~~ indicating evaluate the one or more responses to determine whether the given situation will likely have a positive or negative result;

form a new argument supporting ~~[[the]]~~ a conclusion as to whether the given situation is likely to have a positive or negative result, the new argument comprising the ~~selected one of said templates~~ relevant template, the one or more ~~answers responses~~, the supporting evidence, and the conclusion; and

publish the new argument, including the relevant template, one or more ~~answers responses~~, the supporting evidence, and the conclusion, for review.